



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Fishing News

Conservation and Recreation



10 Fantastic Fall Fishing Spots

Fall offers fantastic fishing – get out and enjoy it. The air is cool, lakes are less crowded and fish are easy to catch.

Try these expert tips to catch more fish at our top fall fishing spots:

- [Big Hollow Lake](#), Des Moines County – find largemouth bass in shallow water around logs, brush, stumps, sand and rocks next to weed beds. Bass will move to transition zones with mid- to deep water as water temperatures cool more. Try jigs and tubes around humps. Keep your bait presentation slow and precise since bass are less likely to move very far to chase a meal in cold water.
- [Black Hawk Lake](#), Sac County – good fall bluegill and crappie fishing along the shoreline; slowly jig around the legs of docks still out in the lake.
- [Clear Lake](#), Cerro Gordo County – many [Master Angler](#) qualifying yellow bass (10 inches) are available to catch this fall. Use small jigs tipped with a nightcrawler, minnows or cut bait. Stay on the move to find schools of fish.
- [Don Williams Lake](#), Boone County - a strong black crappie population welcomes anglers. Drift the middle of the lake with small jigs in early fall. Fish will move to structure in late fall – quickly find structure in the lake with the [printable fishing structures maps](#).

- [Lake Darling](#), Washington County – find black crappie and bluegills in tight to shore as lake temperatures cool. They'll be eager to bite as they actively feed to pack on fat reserves for the winter. Use a 1/32 oz. jig tipped with a half-inch paddletail body; slow and steady retrieve is best.
 - [Lake Miami](#), Monroe County – excellent fall crappie and bluegill fishing; look for brush piles and standing timber. Some days these fish can be caught suspended in the lower half of the lake. Excellent largemouth bass fishing with 12- to 15-inch bass and many up to 21-inches.
 - [Little River Lake](#), Decatur County – catch lots of 9-inch bluegills with a chance to hook a 10+ inch crappie. Use jigs fished in shallow bays or near the cedar tree brush piles. Walleye fishing can be good in the fall. Troll crankbaits along main lake points or use jigs fished along the roadbed or rock fields. Little River Lake also has good numbers of largemouth bass. Try finesse plastics fished around the cedar tree brush piles or rock piles.
 - [Lost Grove Lake](#), Scott County – look for muskies in 4- to 5-feet of water around shallow weed beds, sunken timber, stumps, rocks and humps. Use crankbaits, jerkbaits, bucktails, and jigs or try a 4- to 5-inch plastic lizard. [Catch and release](#) muskies under 40 inches.
 - [Mississippi River](#) – catch walleye and sauger in the tailwaters of most of the Lock and Dams on the Mississippi River up and down Iowa's east coast in 15-to 30-feet of water. A jig and minnow seems to hook the largest fish. Try a three way swivel with one short 10-inch line going to a heavy pencil weight and the other 2-foot line attached to a small hook with minnows or nightcrawlers. Stay on the move to keep contact with the bottom.
 - [Storm Lake](#), Buena Vista County – late September and into October offers a good fall walleye bite. Troll crankbaits along the edges and through the dredge cuts. Try also drifting crawler harnesses.
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Urban Trout Lakes - fun for everyone

Grab your neighbors, friends and kids and experience the thrill of trout fishing this fall at an urban trout lake near you. DNR fisheries staff will release between 1,000 to 2,000 rainbow trout at 17 locations across Iowa in October and November.

Fall urban trout stockings are a great place to take kids to catch their first fish. Snap a photo of your child and their catch and submit it for a [First Fish certificate](#).

Learn more about trout fishing in urban lakes on the [DNR trout fishing webpage](#).

Urban Trout Stocking Schedule

More Fall Fishing Tips

- Fall bite shifts to the main part of the day – fish are more active and will be close to shore.
- Find a new favorite fishing spot with our interactive [Fishing Atlas](#).
- Target areas of a lake where the water is warmer – mostly in shallow water bays along the north shore.
- Get tips for catching bass, walleye, crappies, muskies and more on our [How to fish for webpages](#).
- Check conditions before you go with the weekly [Iowa Fishing Report](#).

